

I'm proud to say that he earned a reputation as someone who worked across the aisle, striving to find common-sense, bipartisan solutions to the issues of the day.

Congressman Michel celebrated his 90th birthday last month, and he continues to be an inspiration for all who are more interested in working together to get results than trying to score cheap political shots.

Central Illinois has a long tradition of public servants who made a career out of reaching across party lines. Former Republican Senator Everett Dirksen of Pekin, in my district also, played a key role in the passage of the 1964 civil rights bill, while former Republican Congressman Ray LaHood of Peoria has worked across the aisle to improve the Nation's roads, bridges, and rail lines as Secretary of Transportation under the Obama administration.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that all Members of this body will join me in pledging to work together to put the people we represent first, and I would like to wish Congressman Michel a happy 90th birthday.

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT COLONEL DONALD HOOD

(Mr. COFFMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, retired United States Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel Donald Hood passed away on December 30, 2012. He served our Nation with distinction, first on Active Duty in the United States Army and later in the Army Reserve.

Lieutenant Colonel Hood began his military service with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he became the first parachute-qualified, combat-ready optometrist in the United States Army.

From 1970 to 1972, Lieutenant Colonel Hood served in Southeast Asia during the war in Vietnam as the Army's chief of eye services at the Diplomatic Medical Mission in Bangkok, Thailand.

In 1972, he left Active Duty and continued serving his country in the United States Army Reserve as the chief of optometry for the 5502 United States Army Reserve Hospital in Aurora, Colorado, until his retirement in 1990.

Lieutenant Colonel Hood is survived by his wife, Patricia; his daughter, Chelsey Russell; his son, Cayman; and his granddaughter, Hayden Russell.

ACROSS-THE-BOARD BUDGET CUTS

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, later today, the House will vote to restore funding to the Nation's air traffic control system to better protect the traveling public and to restore order to a

vital sector of our economy by shifting unused funds.

Two lessons are hopefully now learned:

Across-the-board budget cuts are abysmally stupid. Cut a program that's vital to the health, safety and the economy, and what about this unused money over here? Oh, we can't move that, so we took care of that.

Second, there are some here who believe the Federal Government doesn't need to and should not invest in facilitating the movement of goods and freight and people in this country. It should devolve to the States.

Well, this is an object lesson in how vital these Federal programs are to the Nation's airspace. And next year, when the Highway Trust Fund goes below zero and we cut spending by \$50 billion on highways and transit, we will have another crisis. Let's hope we don't have to see a million layoffs and total disruption across the country before we fix that one. Fix that one before it happens.

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NATIONAL PARK WEEK

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate National Park Week.

Our national parks are truly one of America's greatest natural resources, drawing nearly 279 million visitors and families who go to camp, hike, fish, and explore each year. Minnesota, my home State, is home to several national parks as well, with lakes and rivers and waterways.

In just a few years, our national parks will celebrate their 100th birthday. In preparation for this centennial, I have introduced legislation, H.R. 627, to allow the U.S. Mint to issue a National Park commemorative coin, with all of the proceeds going to help our national parks and our National Park Foundation. The bill has strong bipartisan support, and it is one more way that we can provide additional resources for our national parks.

Protecting and preserving these beautiful spaces—our national parks, monuments, and Civil War battlefields—for future generations is important. Our National Park Week is a perfect time to reignite this interest for individual community efforts in order to ensure that our national parks remain and retain their place as the most beautiful in the world.

A NEW ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce a new achievement in mathematics.

We learned about square roots in middle school. In the 15th century, mathematicians discovered the square roots of negative numbers. These "imaginary numbers" form the basis of much science and engineering, which are applied for practical uses, like the design of airplane wings.

In the 1920s, Paul Dirac constructed the square roots of "differential operators" in the development of quantum mechanics, which is the basis of much high-tech science.

In the 1970s, another type of square root, called "matrix factorization," which is important in physics, was discovered by David Eisenbud. This month, Daniel Murfet, a postdoc at the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute, announced new ways of linking matrix factorizations together, which will have numerous applications.

Mr. Murfet's work was funded by the National Science Foundation, and illustrates the importance of our Nation's continuing investment in the research and education of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last night, a random telephone poll of my constituents was conducted in five Hill Country counties in the 21st District of Texas.

Here are the results:

Eighty-eight percent feel that the border should be secured before other immigration reforms take effect; 84 percent favor a system that would require employers to hire legal workers; 96 percent think that the Federal Government should balance its budget; and 85 percent believe the American people are taxed too much.

These are sincerely held views by hardworking, law-abiding, tax-paying good Americans. Congress would do well to heed their advice.

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

(Mr. HOLT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a member of the Safe Climate Caucus to take note of a major milestone in human history. This past week, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere passed 400 parts per million.

I say a "milestone in human history" because this level of carbon dioxide has never been seen in human history. In fact, this level has not been achieved for millions of years.

I also say a "milestone in human history" because it is human activity—the way we produce and use energy—that is responsible for this high concentration; and it is of historic importance because, as scientists have made